



STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING

RICK SNYDER
GOVERNOR

MICHAEL P. FLANAGAN
STATE SUPERINTENDENT

April 30, 2015

MEMORANDUM

To: Local and Intermediate School District Superintendents and
Public School Academy Directors

FROM: Linda Forward *Linda Forward*
Interim Deputy Superintendent
Education Services

SUBJECT: Improvement Process for Intermediate School District Plans for the
Delivery of Special Education Programs and Services

The Office of Special Education (OSE) has been working on improving the process of development, approval and review of Intermediate School District (ISD) Plans for the delivery of special education programs and services in Michigan. The OSE began this work three years ago by soliciting stakeholder input to develop a shared vision of a process that accomplishes the following:

- Regulate and ensure compliance and transparency
- Meet the requirements of state law and rule
- Maintain consistency across all intermediate school districts
- Allow for local flexibility and innovation
- Use technology to improve efficiency

The OSE will continue its work toward this vision of improvement by creating a model form for ISD plan development that focuses on the required content of the plan. Additionally, the OSE is working on an electronic submission system for ISD plans. The OSE will begin using a rotational schedule for the submission and review of ISD plan development and approval beginning in the fall of 2015. This rotation schedule is available at:

www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/ISD_Plan_Rotation_Schedule_487588_7.pdf

The OSE will be working with ISDs to streamline the content of their plan to include only the required items under the current Michigan Administrative Rules for Special Education.

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

JOHN C. AUSTIN – PRESIDENT • CASANDRA E. ULBRICH – VICE PRESIDENT
MICHELLE FECTEAU – SECRETARY • PAMELA PUGH SMITH – TREASURER
LUPE RAMOS-MONTIGNY – NASBE DELEGATE • KATHLEEN N. STRAUS
EILEEN LAPPIN WEISER • RICHARD ZEILE

608 WEST ALLEGAN STREET • P.O. BOX 30008 • LANSING, MICHIGAN 48909
www.michigan.gov/mde • (517) 373-3324

Additionally, in the spring of 2014, the Michigan Office of the Auditor General issued an audit report to the OSE that includes a finding regarding plans containing waivers. MCL 380.1281 states that, "a waiver shall not be granted for more than 3 years." Allowing the waivers to remain in the plan does not meet the review requirements of this law. In response to this finding, the OSE has committed to work with ISDs over the next three years to systematically review and revise each plan to remove waivers and waiver language.

All ISD plans that are submitted beginning May 1, 2015 will not be approved if there is waiver language contained in the plan. Waiver language is language that differs from the requirements of the Michigan Administrative Rules for Special Education. For example, R 340.1749a(2) Elementary Resource Program states, "The elementary resource teacher shall serve not more than 10 students at any 1 time and not more than 18 different students." An example of waiver language would be that the teacher could serve 20 students. This type of language must be submitted through the separate waiver review process and will be subject to all of the requirements of state law regarding rule waivers.

The OSE appreciates your patience in this improvement process. Technical assistance in support of this new system will begin in the summer of 2015. If you have any questions, please contact Nancy Rotarius at rotariusn@michigan.gov

cc: Michigan Education Alliance